

The WHITE HOUSE PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA



The White House

[Office of the Press Secretary](#)

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# Statement by the President on the El Faro Cargo Ship

The captain and crew of the El Faro were Americans and Poles, men and women, experienced mariners and young seamen. They were beloved sons and daughters and loving husbands and fathers. They were dedicated engineers, technicians and a cook. And these 33 sailors were united by a bond that has linked our merchant mariners for more than two centuries--a love of the sea. As their ship battled the storm, they were no doubt working as they lived--together, as one crew. This tragedy also reminds us that most of the goods and products we rely on every day still move by sea. As Americans, our economic prosperity and quality of life depend upon men and women who serve aboard ships like the El Faro.

I thank everyone across our government and in the private sector who worked so tirelessly, on the sea and in the air, day after day, in the massive search for survivors. The investigation now underway will have the full support of the U.S. government, because the grieving families of the El Faro deserve answers and because we have to do everything in our power to ensure the safety of our people, including those who work at sea. Today, 28 American families--from Florida to Maine--and five Polish families are heartbroken. May they be comforted, in some small way, in knowing that they have the love and support of their neighbors, the merchant mariner community and the American people. May God bless the men and women of the El Faro. May He comfort their families. And may He watch over and protect all those who serve at sea on behalf of us all.